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ABSTRACT

Business school faculty and language educators agree that the business school curriculum must be internationalized and that means must be provided for students to acquire facility in a foreign language. The use of traditional foreign language offerings to provide language skills to business majors has proven unsatisfactory. The traditional approach takes too long, emphasizes literacy skills and not speech skills, is overly ambitious, and provides limited and nonspecialized vocabulary. A suggested alternative approach would be an optional program stressing the rapid acquisition of foreign language communication skills, reducing the grammatical overload to only essential structures, and tailoring the vocabulary to that needed by the business student's expected needs, while experimenting with comprehension-based instructional methods. The language skills course should be short and intensive, with a minimum of one semester abroad or one year at the home institution but providing a longer period of study if the business administration program is flexible enough. (MSE)

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# THE ROLE OF FOREIGN LANGUAGE TRAINING IN INTERNATIONALIZING THE BUSINESS CURRICULUM

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# THE ROLE OF FOREIGN LANGUAGE TRAINING IN INTERNATIONALIZING THE BUSINESS CURRICULUM

A frequent discussion topic among business school faculty in recent years has been the internationalization of their curriculum. This new found interest in international business perspectives, area studies, and global education can be explained by several factors. Clearly the faculty are responding to evolving business developments and environmental conditions, but they are also reacting to curricular standards and requirements established by the American Assembly of Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB). Recently, language educators have also begun to explore the questions associated with internationalizing the business school curriculum. As an example, the National Council on Foreign Languages and International Studies has announced a number of research and demonstration projects relating to internationalization.

## Why Internationalization?

There is surprisingly little disagreement that the time is right to explore ways to enrich the coverage of international issues in the business curriculum. Economic developments reported in the media repeatedly remind us that the nationalistic boundaries of trade continue to diminish. One indication of this is the tremendous surge in American direct investment abroad in the past twenty years, which is even more impressive when one also considers the total assets of foreign affiliates of U.S. multinationals. (Heller, 1980, p. 47) More recently, there has been a spectacular jump in foreign investment within our borders.

Even in the case of the multinational firm, new communications technologies have made it possible to involve the parent organization and its U.S. based personnel more intimately in the product development and marketing decisions of its overseas subsidiaries. (Dotlich, 1982, p. 26) While this may in time reduce the need for expatriate managers, it actually increases the need for international awareness among a broader spectrum of managers and professionals, including those working within our borders.

However looking only at the multinational firm understates both the extensiveness of the movement toward a world market place and in turn, the need for an internationally relevant business curriculum. When the focus of our examination is expanded to include domestic business organizations which make use of foreign suppliers, export goods or services for sale or resale in foreign markets, or compete with foreign producers in the domestic marketplace it becomes clear that we are really in the midst of a dramatic global integration of the economy.

Regardless of the specific manner in which a firm enters the global marketplace, a persuasive argument can be made the firms competing in this arena have a special need for international competence as well as "cultural sensitivity and adjustment." (Robock and Simmonds, 1983, p. 405) It is critical that managers and technical staff possess international awareness and skills as well as appropriate personal attributes. Because few businesspeople were exposed to internationally oriented college course work or foreign language training, and few have had international work experience, American employers enter the competitive fray at a distinct disadvantage. As stated by one observer: "American multinational organizations face the difficult reality that our work force lacks

international or intercultural competence." (Copeland, 1984, p. 23)

In the case of Americans placed in management positions abroad, the need to function effectively in a foreign environment is confounded by the extensive burdens which go along with such assignments. Richard Robinson notes that the overseas manager is expected to simultaneously fulfill a diverse set of roles: "(1) representative of the parent firm, (2) manager of a local firm, (3) resident of the local community, (4) citizen of the host state..., (5) member of a profession, not to mention (6) member of a family and all that implies." (Robinson, 1984, p. 117) The scope and complexity of these roles effectively blunts the argument that a manager is sent abroad solely to apply generic management skills. One cannot succeed by "subcontracting" to others the need for international and intercultural awareness.

Neither is the need to function in the foreign marketplace restricted to corporate managers. As Christopher Korth points out, there are also large numbers of individuals with particular functional areas of competence who are sent abroad. (Korth, 1985, p. 442) As is the case with senior managers, not only are these individuals expected to do more than use their technical skills, but their expertise must be applied in a different environmental context.

Finally, as has already been noted, the need for international awareness and competence is not restricted to those organizations with foreign operations. Indeed, the rise of international competition has not only extended the need for global competence across a wide range of domestic business organizations, but has also interspersed such needs throughout the organizational hierarchy.

Impact on the Business Curriculum

The AACSB, the primary accrediting agency for U.S. schools of business, has established the goal that the curriculum should prepare the student for "imaginative and responsible citizenship and leadership roles in business and society -- domestic and worldwide." (AACSB, 1984, p. 28) However, the guidelines do not detail the specific content or approach to meeting this goal: "There is no intention that any single approach is required to satisfy the worldwide dimension of the Curriculum Standard, but every student should be exposed to the international dimension through one or more elements of the curriculum." (AACSB, p. 28)

There seems to be agreement that this requirement involves the need for both business specific knowledge and broadly based awareness of other countries and people. (Bonaparte, 1985, p. 12; Lanier, 1979, p. 163; Robock & Simmonds, p. 405) Specific personal and societal characteristics which could be explored in an international context include: heritage, attitudes, religion, sensitivities, politics, economics, legal framework, language, as well as attitudes toward work, achievement, authority, social stability and change.

As a result of the absence of direction from the AACSB, a wide range of curricular reactions to the mandate for worldwide coverage have emerged or are being considered. In many situations the response has been to integrate an international component into existing business courses. Other schools have moved to require a separate international course or sequence of courses.

Yet others have taken the additional step of combining one of these

approaches with a "menu" of required courses offered by other departments. The "menu" may incorporate a diverse set of options to allow students to opt for exposure to particular subject or geographic areas.[1] The combination of approaches embodied by internationalizing existing required courses in business as well as requiring that students select internationally relevant courses in their nonbusiness coursework is premised on the assumption that educational breadth is essential. It also presumes that the needs of students will vary depending on the nature of their academic program as well as the interests, career objectives, and perhaps the aptitudes of the student. This approach supports what Richard Lambert has termed a diffusive goal, that is, "diffusing international materials as widely as possible throughout the curriculum." (Lambert, 1980, p. 156)

Regardless of the approach toward internationalization that business schools have selected or are contemplating, it is apparent that virtually no consideration has been given to foreign language preparation or training.

## The Role of Language Training in the Internationalization of the Business Curriculum

There are many explanations for the omission of foreign language requirements or options in the business curriculum, but the underlying rationale most typically is that there are limits to the number of credits required in a degree program and that language skills are simply not

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[1]An example of such a program is provided in Appendix I.

necessary for the typical business graduate. Some have pointed out that few graduates will ever have foreign assignments which would capitalize on fluency in another language. (Lambert, p. 159) Others have argued that acquiring proficiency in a particular language may actually hinder their career development. (Terpstra, 1978, p. 20) Yet another position is that in many ways American businesses are better off using bilingual foreign nationals to do their work abroad: there is "little evidence that foreign language capacity and international studies expertise are pluses [for Americans] even when combined with accounting, financial, or marketing skills." (Hayden, 1980, p. 146.)

Although the positions described above should not be dismissed out of hand, we believe that a strong case can be made for the inclusion of a foreign language training option in the business curriculum. The business community, in particular, has often been taken to task for its lack of awareness and concern for the folkways and language of other peoples. John Naisbitt, in his recent bestseller Megatrends, asserts that we are in an era of "renaissance in cultural and linguistic assertiveness." He continues, "(f)or Americans, it is self-evident that this is the time to learn another language -- and learn it well. (Naisbitt, 1984, p. 78) Even where foreign language skills are not absolutely necessary, they clearly are beneficial and desirable.

As was described earlier in this paper, few firms are truly independent of the international marketplace (contact may be through international operations, foreign suppliers, exports, imports, or competition in domestic markets with foreign producers). Those who assert that language training is unnecessary because few business graduates will be sent abroad by their

employers seriously underestimate the extent to which we are part of a global economy.

The case for expatriate managers having fluency in the language of the host country is advanced by practitioners and academics alike. A study of Western European managers found almost uniform support for the premise that, in addition to being attuned to local customs and history, expatriate managers should possess a "high proficiency in both the verbal and nonverbal language of the host country." (Zeira, 1979, p. 72) Studies conducted with American organizations have also endorsed the need for expatriates to acquire language skills, although American managers tended to rate this as being somewhat less critical than do their Western European counterparts. (Robinson, 1983, p. 312) Similar research findings are also reported by Baker (1984). The assumption that language is a critical need is also endorsed by the personnel selection criteria typically used by business organizations in making overseas assignments. (Robinson, p. 130; Heller, p. 48; Hayden, p. 147)

Many of the characteristics and traits that are considered essential for the expatriate manager are equally apropos for the domestic manager or technician who has foreign business contacts or is making decisions about operations and sales in foreign countries. It is possible to delegate the responsibility for conversing or negotiating as well as the translation of written documents, but with both the interaction process becomes more impersonal and can involve some loss of control. Quite obviously, where direct communications are involved, language skills are desirable. In any case, as one author notes, "the gesture of attempting to use another language often goes a long way in reducing the image of the insensitive

American " (Dotlich, pp. 30-31).

Another desirable characteristic for both expatriates and personnel based within this country is the need for cultural empathy. This trait is defined by Kirpalani as the "curiosity and interest...required to comprehend fully another people and area" (Kirpalani, 1984, p. 105). Another commentator describes such sensitivity as "an awareness of and a willingness to probe for the reasons people of another culture behave the way they do" (Heller, p. 48).

We agree with those who believe that language delineates culture (Ball and McCulloch, 1985; Lanier; Simon 1980; Robock and Simmonds; Kirpalani; Terpstra). As Bonaparte explains, language facilitates cultural understanding: "Language provides a window into another culture. It also provides more important lessons about how viewpoint and modes of expression vary -- it simulates experience and helps one to understand the nature and extent of international differences" (Bonaparte, p. 12). This viewpoint is echoed by Dotlich: "the nuances, subtle cues and cultural information derived from learning another language are often missed by those who rely on English to conduct business overseas" (Dotlich, p. 30).

Although we believe that proficiency in a second language as well as its implications for cultural awareness are universally valuable, we are not advocating that language competency requirements be added to the required business curriculum for all students. Instead, we are proposing that along with a broad international exposure, reasonable curricular options should be made available. Appropriate courses or other vehicles should be developed for those students having an interest or obvious need for acquiring language skills. A number of schools with specific

international management studies programs require second language competence (e.g., Thunderbird American Graduate School of International Management; Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania; and, the University of South Carolina). For general business programs, however, we propose that language training should be tailored to the needs of the students, and enrollment should be encouraged through counseling, and by increasing the awareness of the relevance and benefits of achieving fluency in a second language.

## The State of Foreign Language Study

Before we can begin an assessment of the ways in which foreign language training might be incorporated into the business school curriculum, it would be useful to explore the state of foreign language study in the United States. It is no secret that we are in the midst of a crisis, both in the perception and the practice of foreign language education. In the face of dropping enrollments, the loosening and elimination of graduation requirements, and a seeming lack of consensus about possible solutions, there are a few notable voices who have sounded the battle call for a new commitment to excellence in foreign language and international studies.

Simon, using some sobering statistics, demonstrates just how poorly the U.S. compares with many developed and developing nations regarding the quantity and quality of foreign language instruction. He points out that "At one-fifth of the nation's two-year colleges, no foreign language course is taught. By contrast, in most developed nations --- and in many of the developing nations --- not even an elementary school is without a foreign language program". (Simon, 1980, p. 32.) Even those students who do study

language in our country rarely acquire even minimum proficiency. Diller, citing a number of research studies, says that "In 1965, 90% of graduating French majors failed to reach the level of minimum professional proficiency in speaking, and only half of them reached that level in reading" (Diller, 1978, p. 1). The literature is full of such shocking revelations, but we can also find some opportunities for correcting this national embarrassment. Thompson, for example, sees hope in the recommendations made by such eminent bodies as the Task Force on Language of the American Council of Education, The Modern Language Association's Task Force, and the President's Commission on Foreign Language and International Studies. (Thompson, 1980) He points to a new awareness in the language teaching profession and among educational administrators that the study of foreign languages has been neglected. He proposes establishing "bilingual education schools" and "international magnet high schools" open to all American students, but concludes that "the question will be resolved in the political arena" because of the enormous commitment of resources which would be required (Thompson, p. 54).

While we commend the efforts of those who call for renewed emphasis on foreign language study in American elementary and secondary schools as well as universities, we find that they all too rarely take into consideration the realities surrounding the rationale for and current practice of foreign language education. When they proclaim the need for a "bilingual" America, they fail to ask themselves the question, "Why isn't America <u>already</u> "bilingual"? The answer to that question is not clear to us yet, but sociolinguists, particularly Joshua Fishman, have begun to explore the factors which have made the United States a <u>de facto</u> monolingual country, despite its size and cultural diversity.

## Options for the Acquisition of Language Skills by College Students--a Review and Critique

We have previously argued that the American business community has something to gain by insisting on an international component in the business school curriculum so that our future business professionals will have an enhanced ability to compete in the world marketplace. The question we are addressing is not how to pull foreign language majors into the business world, but how to supply business majors with the requisite international awareness, a component of which may be foreign language skills. What we are proposing is that we look toward integrating foreign language training into the mainstream business curriculum, at least for some subset of business majors.

Among the many possible options for acquiring foreign language skills are Berlitz-type crash programs, summer school intensive language courses, and semester abroad "total immersion" training. The first option, the Berlitz-style crash course, usually offered by private for-profit language instruction centers, is the method chosen by many organizations to train their employees who are about to embark on foreign assignments. For university students this seems the least appealing option because it is both cost prohibitive and is limited to providing mostly speaking skills without imparting a meaningful in-depth study of culture.

Summer school intensive language courses are an attractive option in that students may dedicate all their time to language study without the distraction of other course work. There are, however, matters of practicality which may inhibit students from choosing this option. Students often must spend summers working full time in order to defray the costs of

their education. Also, a maximum of twelve weeks, sometimes less, is generally available for summer study. This amount of time may not be sufficient for many students to acquire the requisite skills, especially considering the lack of continuing practice after the end of summer session.

The same twelve week time period might be utilized more efficiently in a semester abroad "total immersion" program in which the student is in contact with the language and culture not only in the artificial environment of the classroom, but also outside it. This, too, seems an attractive possibility, but again it is hampered in practice by high cost and the fact that students must give up a quarter or semester of their other studies in favor of acquiring language skills.

In light of this discussion, one may be tempted to rely on existing university foreign language offerings to provide language skills and cultural knowledge to those business students who elect to meet the international component of their program through language study. This option would require the least amount of change in existing university curricula and in particular would avoid an extensive (and expensive) revamping of the foreign language program. At first blush, this seems to be the logical choice, unless, of course, you consider the amount of time available to the business student for acquiring foreign language skills. A typical language skills sequence consists of two years' study in which the major elements of grammar and a basic vocabulary are presented with a more or less equal emphasis placed on the four skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. In many institutions, students take one or two more courses in advanced composition and conversation beyond the two year skills

sequence. In all, there is a commitment of as much as two and one-half years in acquiring a minimal degree of proficiency, something we suspect many students would not opt for, unless required to do so.

Now we have arrived at the crucial point on which our argumentation rests: to learn a foreign language to the degree required in order to function adequately in the cultural milieu of the native speakers of that language requires much more time than that which is available to the typical business major, or any other non-language major, for that matter.

It might be productive at this point to consider the amount of time required to produce a bilingual person. Using the Foreign Service Institute guidelines for reaching "minimum professional proficiency", Diller asserts that "In an ordinary school year of 180 days, at the rate of one hour a day, it would take five years to reach 900 hours of instruction in a foreign language. We can safely conclude that a student cannot become bilingual in less than five years of study...." (Diller, p. 135). Terrell, in a commentary on the current situation in foreign language education, says that "The reality is that the majority of our students in one and two year language courses do not attain even a minimal level of communicative competence" (Terrell, 1977, pp. 325-326). Similarly, Belasco critiques the classroom setting and the methods used in the last few decades and asserts that "After more than forty years of foreign language teaching, I have yet to encounter a group of students who, having completed two years of foreign language study in high school and two years in college, may be said to have attained a satisfactory level of proficiency" (Belasco, 1983, p.213). Furthermore, he continues, "Few students --after six, seven, or more years of foreign language exposure-- approximate the level of proficiency

attained by a three-year old native speaker of the language they study" (p. 214). While this may represent an extreme position, it certainly underscores the importance of time in acquiring a second language.

The lack of time is not the only obstacle in learning a foreign language in the classroom. The fact that most first year language programs try to strike a balance between the four skills but with a decided leaning toward literacy skills (reading and writing), almost certainly assures mediocre attainment in all four skills but particulary in listening and speaking. It is true that certain methodologies and approaches stress different skills, but a cursory perusal of most current first year foreign language texts will show that the authors are dedicated to offering a balanced presentation of the four skills, more or less equally throughout the book. The development of literacy skills was the main goal of the grammar/translation method, but the primacy of this goal is still with us, as Terrell points out, "in the guise of a new name, cognitive-code".(Terrell, p. 325) There is a good reason why literacy skills have been stressed: the foreign language curriculum has been geared toward producing majors with literary skills and some cultural knowledge. This may be sufficient for foreign language majors, but if students from other disciplines want to stress speaking skills, for example, they must look elsewhere. Simon perceives this as a great problem for attracting a new student "clientele" to foreign language programs. He asserts that "so long as literature study is the major aim, the ability of the language courses to attract a multidisciplinary interest will lag". (Simon, p.43)

Not only are the skills presented in most of our foreign language classes out of sync with the needs of other specialized groups, but also

the content itself is not geared to specialized needs. We all too often teach our students about the language, but not the language itself. In terms of Krashen's (1981) Monitor theory, the students learn to rely too heavily on the Monitor, that is to say that their language abilities are learned, not acquired. Much of the time, as Belasco indicates, "the teacher does most of the work and gets all the practice". (Belasco, p. 213) He also questions the wisdom of presenting what he calls the "fifty traditional grammatical principles" as necessary and sufficient for the acquisition of a foreign language. In an article otherwise at odds with Belasco's views, Verzasconi supports Belasco's criticism, suggesting "that we ought to at least consider abandoning the notion that all the structures of a language must be covered in one academic year..." (Verzasconi, 1984, p. 140). The overwhelming amount of grammar traditionally presented in first year language classes is a clear obstacle to communication. As Terrell indicates, "it is probably true that normal first year language students are not capable of learning to control in their speech the immense amount of grammatical complexity taught in most classes in a single year." (Terrell, p. 326) Furthermore, with so much time spent on grammar, vocabulary acquisition is kept to a bare minimum, therefore students may be able (with much thought and effort) to create fairly complex sentences after a year of study, but they may be able to communicate only in semantically restricted situations.

The literature abounds with calls for more emphasis on true communication by "establishing as quickly as possible a large lexicon" so that students may speak on as many different topics as possible.(Terrell, p. 327) This is not happening in most classrooms, and textbooks remain

organized more around grammar topic than semantic fields.

Clearly, then, the use of traditional foreign language offerings to provide language skills to non-language majors, specifically business majors, is an unsatisfactory arrangement at best, and is in all probability counterproductive. The following points summarize the discussion to this point:

1) Acquiring a second language in traditional university classroom settings takes an inordinate amount of time in exchange for the limited proficiency one can reasonably expect to attain.

2) The four skills sequence most commonly taught in American universities is designed to produce literacy skills, not speaking skills.

3) The goal of acquiring all the grammatical structures of a language in one year is an overly ambitious goal and one which is probably impossible to attain.

4) The limited amount of vocabulary presented in a typical first year language course is both too small and too general to be of much use in a business setting.

## Language Education: A Proposal

Despite the criticisms we have just made of the use of traditional foreign language offerings to provide language skills to business majors, we do feel that university course work can be an appropriate vehicle for acquiring foreign language and area study skills. What we are offering is a specific proposal for altering both the content and methods employed in university foreign language skills courses so that they will focus on the language needs of those business students who want to pursue foreign language and culture studies. The issues associated with implementation

will be addressed in a subsequent portion of this paper.

As was described earlier, the major weakness we find with the content of traditional foreign language offerings is that they tend to stress the learning of literacy skills throughout the two year sequence. They also rely too heavily on an extensive exposure to grammar. If we can accept the premise that what business majors really need out of a foreign language course is to acquire communication skills (comprehension and speaking), then we must restructure our courses to insure that they instill communicative competence, not merely a passing acquaintance with a large quantity of grammar rules. Terrell defines communicative competence as the ability to "understand the essential points of what a native speaker says ... in a real communicative situation and ... respond in such a way that the native speaker interprets the response with little or no effort and without errors that are so distracting that they interfere drastically with communication." (Terrell, p. 326) The content of the language course must be altered in such a way as to promote successful acquisition of communication skills, and we as teachers must be willing to tolerate (as the native speaker probably will) a lower level of structural or grammatical accuracy. As Terrell points out, "Once the student is communicating, however imperfectly, the teacher can then direct the materials and experiences toward the development of student grammar ("interlanguage") in the direction of adult grammar." (Terrell, p. 327)

What can be done to insure that the content of the course will stress communication? The first step is to assess what grammatical structures have the highest frequency of occurrence and present the least morphological complexity. This has been done quite successfully in programs in English

for Science and Technology (EST) and English for Special Purposes (ESP). Wilkins speaks of the possibility of establishing for any given language a "minimum adequate grammar" which he defines as "a knowledge of the grammatical system of a language sufficient to meet fundamental and urgent communicative needs." (Wilkins, 1979b, p. 97) In a similar vein, Belasco advocates the presentation of only a "core" grammar in first year language courses. (Belasco, p. 215) As an example of what can be done toward reducing the grammatical load so as to allow concentration on communication, we cite an unpublished beginning German text by Jonathan Conant of the University of Minnesota-Duluth. What Conant has done is to create a course for those who need to know some German, but can only invest in one college quarter of study. The details of how he manages to present a "minimum adequate grammar" are beyond the scope of this paper, but the guiding purpose, according to Conant is to provide the student with a "good command of rudimentary German, and not a rudimentary command of good German."(Conant, 1982, p. 3)

Once the essential grammatical structures have been identified, we must tailor the presentation of vocabulary to the expected needs of the business student. From the very beginning, we can begin introducing vocabulary which will be useful in the domain of business and commerce, along with the vocabulary of everyday life. Students will be able to speak on topics which seem more "real" because they are applicable to their major area of study. It should be possible to create a syllabus which corresponds more nearly to the communicative needs of the learner. Wilkins proposes what he calls a "notional syllabus" which "is not a function of the situation in which [the students] will find themselves, but of the

notions they need to express. One can envisage planning the linguistic content according to the semantic demands of the learner." (Wilkins, 1979a, p. 84)

As regards teaching methodology, our proposal is somewhat less emphatic, but remains consistent with our discussion of content. The question of which method is most successful at providing second language skills is one which is still quite open to debate. Terrell cites various studies, among those the Pennsylvania Foreign Language Research Project, which wasable to conclude "very little about the value of different approaches" in terms of their relationship to the attainment of language skills. (Terrell, p. 329) Diller also concludes that we have learned very little through educational research on foreign language teaching methodology. (Diller, p. 97)

Despite the lack of consensus on methodology among language educators, we suggest that alternative methods can be productive if the goal is to provide the learner with sufficient tools to communicate effectively with native speakers of the language. What we are advocating is experimentation with comprehension-based approaches to language learning such as Asher's "Total Physical Response", Gattegno's "Silent Way", or Winitz and Reeds's "Rapid Acquisition of Language by the Avoidance of Speaking". One of the more promising methodologies is Terrell's "Natural Approach" which seems to have amalgamated the best of the direct method, Total Physical Response, and Krashen's Monitor theory of second language acquisition.

Issues of Implementation

We must now turn our attention to the time a business student realistically can spend acquiring foreign language skills and cultural knowledge. For those students there are both restrictions on the amount of coursework done outside the business curriculum, and substantial existing non-business requirements. For this reason, it is likely that language skills courses of necessity will be of relatively short duration and will be intensive in nature. Frink proposes the use of intensive programs, such as those developed by the Army during WWII, in university foreign language programs. (Frink, 1982, p.11) To insure a reasonable degree of proficiency, Hilt recommends "a period of total immersion in a foreign environment, a minimum of a summer abroad..." (Hilt, 1982, p. 7) If the course of study must be limited to one semester or quarter, then we recommend it be done either abroad (where possible) or in an intensive, total immersion setting. This may be most easily accomplished during a summer session.

If the business program is more flexible, allowing more time for coursework outside the major, then we propose a one year course designed with a "notional syllabus" in mind and following our recommendations for fostering communicative competence. The optimum situation would be one which allows a two year language skills and cultural studies sequence, in which students would begin to acquire literacy skills in the second year and could also take traditional courses in culture and literature. This final option could only be implemented where there is degree flexibility and an openness to interdisciplinary curricular experimentation.

## Conclusion

We believe that a strong case can be made that knowledge of a foreign language can be of value to people entering the business world. Our proposal is that as a means of partially satisfying the international component of degree requirements, business administration students should have the option of coursework in language studies. Existing offerings fail to address the needs of this group of students. We must devise new skills courses which emphasize the acquisition of communicative competence in a relatively short period of time, and we must be careful to tailor the grammatical and lexical content of the courses to the communicative needs of the students. We realize that, in times of diminishing resources, foreign language departments may find they cannot afford the cost of staff and materials development necessary to adopt a proposal such as ours. Furthermore, we recognize that, particularly in some small colleges and universities, the potential enrollment in such specialized courses would not be large enough to justify their implementation in terms of a cost/benefit ratio. We submit that these issues of implementation do not detract from the validity of our proposal. The proposal should be judged on the basis of its conceptual merit and as an alternative, among many, for internationalizing the business school curriculum.

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# APPENDIX I

## Summary of Required International Curricular Requirements for the Bachelor of Accounting and Bachelor of Business Administration Degrees University of Minnesota, Duluth Effective September 1985

All BAc and BBA students must select a minimum of one course from each of the following groups:

Group I

Anthropology 1604--Cultural Anthropology
Geography 1201--World Regions as Human Habitats
Geography 1303--Cultural Geography
Geography 1312--Economic Geography
Political Science 1050--International Relations
Political Science 1500--Contemporary Political Systems
Social Work 1210--Global Issues
Art History 1805--Art and Culture
History 1155--English History
History 1206--Introduction to Modern Europe

Group II

Accounting 5525--Seminar in International Accounting
Business Law 5120--Legal Environment of Multinational Business
Economics 5453--International Economics and Finance
Finance and Management Information Sciences 3649--International Finance
Management Studies 3724--International Business
Political Science 3400--Topics in World Politics
Political Science 3420--International Law I
Political Science 3421--International Law II
Political Science 3455--Alliance Politics
Political Science 3610--Political Economy: An Introduction
Social Work 5502--International Social Development